

NASA Glenn Research Center  
Cleveland, Ohio

December 8, 2006

TO: Glenn Civil Service Employees

FROM: CFA/Chief, Office of Human Resources and Workforce Planning

SUBJECT: Application for Voluntary Separation Incentive (Buyout) and Early Out Authority

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has approved NASA's request for Voluntary Separation Incentive (VSIP)/Voluntary Early Retirement (VERA). The plan the Center submitted to Headquarters on December 4, 2006, to use these authorities has been approved. As a result, the Glenn Research Center is now authorized to conduct a buyout with the primary objective being to facilitate the rebalancing of skills to meet ongoing mission needs, address budget issues and support the Exploration Vision.

The following critical competencies are excluded from applying for the buyout:

Acoustics	Intellectual Property Law
Acquisition Planning	Internal Control/Audit
Acquisition and Contract Management	International Law
Advanced Mission Analysis	International Program Development
Aerospace Systems Concept Development and Technology	IT Architecture
Budgeting Management	Legal Application Practice
Business IT Systems	Legal Assistance
Business Management	Mission Analysis and Planning
Commercial Law	Mission Assurance
Commercial Technology	Mission Execution
Contract Formation	Mission Flight Design
Contract Management and Performance Assessment	Paralegal
Contracts Law	Partnership and Business Development
Cost Estimation and Analysis	Patent Agent
Education Programs and Technologies	Personnel/EEO Law
Environmental Factors	Policy Management
Environmental/Real Property Law	Professional Administrative Operations
Export Control	Program/Project Management
Financial Management	Propulsion Systems and Testing
General Law	Public Communications and Outreach
Government Affairs	Quality Engineering and Assurance
Information Resources Planning and Evaluation	Rocket Propulsion
Information Systems Security	Safety Engineering and Assurance
Inspection, Investigation and Compliance	Simulation Systems
Integrated Logistics Support	Software Assurance Engineering
Integrated Engineering	Systems Engineering

It is suggested that all employees check the Competency Management System (CMS) to identify their competency.

We have been approved to offer 80 buyouts. The positions identified and the numbers of buyouts within each category are listed in the enclosure.

Our plan for separation incentives (buyout amounts) will, as in the past, be the maximum allowable by law (i.e., up to \$25,000). Employees being offered the VSIP, who previously received severance pay in this or another Federal agency, will not receive the full \$25,000.

In order to be eligible for the buyout, you must occupy a position with the title, series and grade of those listed on the enclosure. Again, employees with critical skills and/or in positions with critical competencies as primary competencies are ineligible for a VSIP/VERA. Questions pertaining to your listed competency should be addressed, through your supervisor, to Mr. Ron Mullinax 3-6363 or Ms. Traci L. Savage at 3-2499.

The buyout application window will open December 11 and continue through December 18, 2006. Employees to which the buyout will be offered will be notified no later than December 26, 2006. Separations could begin as early as December 31, 2006, but not later than March 31, 2007. If the number of eligible applicants exceeds the allowable number for any category, priority will be given to those employees with the earliest Federal service computation dates within the category. If there is a tie of service computation dates, the buyout will be offered on a first come, first served basis.

The buyout legislation excludes from eligibility, re-employed annuitants, employees in receipt of a specific notice of involuntary separation for misconduct or unsatisfactory performance, employees serving under time-limited appointments and employees who previously received a buyout under any authority. Employees applying for disability retirement are also ineligible.

You will be asked to sign an agreement that says that, in exchange for an incentive payment, you agree voluntarily to resign or retire on a specific date. Although the separation is voluntary and generally can be withdrawn by the employee at any time prior to separation, in some cases, the Agency may require an employee to honor his or her agreement and separate the employee with a buyout on the agreed upon date, if harm or disruption would occur as a result of the employee's retention. For example, management may have made a commitment to place another employee in the position, or abolish the position.

Employees are urged to take the application for an incentive seriously and be prepared to separate on the agreed date in the event that NASA has a valid reason to deny the employee's request to withdraw the buyout agreement.

The buyout application form is enclosed. All other forms that must be submitted as a complete package are available on the Office of Human Resources and Workforce Planning Web site at <http://www.grc.nasa.gov/WWW/OHR/Buyout/>. Please have your SF-52 submitted through the Federal Personnel Payroll System (FPPS) via your supervisor. You will need to choose the appropriate forms based on your retirement system, either CSRS or FERS. Please download the form packages, complete the forms included in this package, and turn them in no later than 4:30 p.m., December 18, 2006, to Building 500, Room 2517.

Employees accepted for the Buyout/Early Out who will be separating on December 31, 2006, or January 3, 2007 are expected to report to the DEB cafeteria for an Exit Clearance Processing on December 29, 2006. You will be given the time at a later date. Representatives from the offices identified on the Employee Separation Clearance Record, NASA C-432a, will be available in the DEB Cafeteria, December 29, 2006, to finalize completion of that form. Employees separating at a later date should continue to complete the Exit Clearance Form, and will be notified by the Benefits Office of their date for Exit Processing.

In the event that applications for buyout exceed the number allowed in each category employees will be held on a waiting list. As eligible applicants withdraw or decline, those on the waiting list will be notified as they become eligible. In fairness to your fellow employees, we request that if you are not seriously intending to separate with the buyout that you refrain from submitting an application.

An individual who has received a voluntary separation incentive payment under this authority and accepts any employment for compensation with the Government of the United States within 5 years after the date of the separation on which the payment is based shall be required to pay the entire amount of the incentive payment. In this context, "employment" includes working for a contractor in a way that creates a personal services relationship to the Government. To preclude the creation of such a personal service relationships, in previous buyouts the Center has not permitted employees who have taken a buyout and gone to work for a Center contractor to have a duty station on the Center. While the commitment to avoid creating personal service relationships still remain the same, the Center will no longer preclude employees who accept a buyout from working for a Center contractor on site.

The Office of Personnel Management has approved a blanket waiver allowing employees who do not meet the minimum 5 years of Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) to continue their coverage upon retirement. OPM will grant pre-approved waivers to employees who have been:

- Covered under the FEHB Program continuously since the beginning date of the Agency's latest statutory VSIP authority, or OPM approved VSIP or VERA authority (11/22/2006); and
- Retire during the statutory VSIP or OPM approved VSIP/VERA period; and
- Receive a VSIP; or
- Take early optional retirement; or
- Take discontinued service retirement based on an involuntary separation due to reduction-in-force, directed reassignment, reclassification to a lower grade, or abolishment of position.

Retirement information and application forms are available on the Office of Human Resources and Workforce Planning Web site at: <http://www.grc.nasa.gov/WWW/OHR/buyout/>. You may obtain a retirement benefits statement by accessing the NASA Employee Benefits System at <http://nasapeople.nasa.gov/NEBS/index.htm> Questions regarding application for buyout and retirement should be directed to GRC-BenefitsOffice@mail.nasa.gov or by calling 3-2034.

/s/

Carol A. Wessel

2 Enclosures

Title	Series	Grade(s)	Competency	Maximum Number of Buyout/Earlyout	Organization(s) (Center-wide or other)
CONFIGURATION MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST, PROGRAM SUPPORT SPECIALIST, PROJECT CONTROL SPECIALIST, PROJECT MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST, STAFF ASSISTANT, SUPERVISORY BUSINESS SYSTEMS MANAGER	0301	11 thru 14	All competencies excluding NASA Critical Competencies	4	Centerwide
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT ASSISTANT, PROJECT SUPPORT ASSISTANT	0303	07	All competencies excluding NASA Critical Competencies	1	Centerwide
SECRETARY (OFFICE AUTOMATION)	0318	09 thru 10	All competencies excluding NASA Critical Competencies	1	Centerwide
AST- EXPERIMENTAL FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT, AST- GAS AND FLUID SYSTEMS, AST- EXPERIMENTAL FACILITIES TECHNIQUES, AST- AEROSPACE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL TECHNIQUES, AST- TECHNICAL ENGINEERING OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT, AST- ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY UTILIZATION & COMMERCIALIZATION, AST- CONTROL SYSTEMS, AST- TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT, SUPERVISORY AST- AEROSPACE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL TECHNIQUES, SUPERVISORY AST- EXPERIMENTAL FACILITIES TECHNIQUES, SUPERVISORY AST- ENGINEERING PROGRAM MANAGEMENT	0801	13 thru 15	All competencies excluding NASA Critical Competencies	8	Centerwide
ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN, ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN, MATERIALS ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN, MECHANICAL ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN, LEAD MECHANICAL ENGINEERING TECHNICIAN	0802	10 thru 13	All competencies excluding NASA Critical Competencies	25	Centerwide
MECHANICAL ENGINEER	0830	14	All competencies excluding NASA Critical Competencies	1	Centerwide
SUPERVISORY ELECTRICAL ENGINEER, ELECTRICAL ENGINEER	0850	13 thru 15	All competencies excluding NASA Critical Competencies	14	Centerwide
COMPUTER ENGINEER	0854	13	All competencies excluding NASA Critical Competencies	3	Centerwide

<b>Title</b>	<b>Series</b>	<b>Grade(s)</b>	<b>Competency</b>	<b>Maximum Number of Buyout/Earlyout</b>	<b>Organization(s) (Center-wide or other)</b>
ELECTRONICS TECHNICIAN	0856	11 thru 12	All competencies excluding NASA Critical Competencies	3	Centerwide
AEROSPACE ENGINEER, SUPERVISORY AEROSPACE ENGINEER	0861	14 thru 15	All competencies excluding NASA Critical Competencies	12	Centerwide
CONTRACT SUPPORT SPECIALIST	1101	11 thru 12	All competencies excluding NASA Critical Competencies	1	Centerwide
PHYSICAL SCIENTIST	1301	14 thru 15	All competencies excluding NASA Critical Competencies	1	Centerwide
PHYSICIST, SUPERVISORY PHYSICIST	1310	14 thru 15	All competencies excluding NASA Critical Competencies	3	Centerwide
RESEARCH SUPPORT SPECIALIST, RESEARCH TEST SUPPORT MANAGER	1601	13	All competencies excluding NASA Critical Competencies	3	Centerwide

**NASA 2007 Separation Incentive (Buyout) Agreement  
December 2006**

I wish to voluntarily apply for a separation incentive payment (buyout):

I am submitting an application for:

\_\_\_\_\_ optional retirement

\_\_\_\_\_ voluntary early retirement

\_\_\_\_\_ resignation

- My decision to leave NASA and Federal employment is voluntary.
- I will not be eligible for reemployment (paid or unpaid) within the Federal Government for 5 years from the date of my separation unless a waiver is approved by OPM, and I repay the gross amount of the buyout.
- I will not be eligible to enter into a “personal services” contract with the Federal Government for 5 years from the date of my separation, unless a waiver is approved by OPM and I repay the gross amount of the buyout (I understand that a personal services contract is with me, as an individual, contracting directly with the Federal Government to provide services).
- To receive a separation incentive payment (buyout), my separation date must be on or before March 31, 2007. I understand NASA may delay this date if my current task is mission critical. I will be advised of the alternative date.
- If I subsequently apply and am approved for disability retirement, or an alternative form of annuity (AFA) based on a life-threatening condition, I will be required to repay the entire amount of the buyout. (I understand this will only occur if the disabling or life-threatening condition is present at the time I receive the buyout).
- I understand that to continue health benefits coverage into retirement, I must have been enrolled continuously in the Federal Employees Health Benefit (FEHB) program for an OPM specified period of time, normally 5 years. I am responsible for insuring I meet the eligibility requirements.
- I understand that since my separation is voluntary, I may not be eligible under my states’ laws for unemployment compensation.
- I understand that my organization, and other Center organizations that have a responsibility for employee clearance activities, will be made aware of my intent to separate.

- I understand that I may possess a critical competency required at another NASA Center involved in the buyout; however, I am unwilling to relocate. As a result, I request NASA proceed with my request for a buyout.

I agree to separate from the Federal Service effective: \_\_\_\_\_, in return for payment of a voluntary separation incentive (buyout). I understand that my separation is voluntary and generally can be withdrawn at any time prior to separation. I further understand that the Agency may choose not to honor my request to withdraw my retirement/resignation and require me to separate with a buyout on the agreed upon date, if harm or disruption would occur as a result of my retention in the Federal service. In such an event, the Agency would provide me with the reason to deny my request.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date